

From The Adjutant General:

I firmly believe that a strong Total Guard Family is essential to our mission success. The vision is a fully functioning Family Chain of Concern working with a fully supportive Military Chain of Command. As we progress to be the premiere force of the 21st Century, we will battle to retain quality soldiers and airmen; the readiness and strong support of our families will continue to be key force multipliers. I consider the enclosed Family Readiness Program, supporting handbooks and training dates, to be an essential part of our first goal of retaining highly qualified personnel.

To Commanders, Senior NCOs and other Leaders: Its time to move past the “crisis mode” when it comes to our families and in their participation in successes of the Arizona National Guard. Too often we wait for a major event – a Desert Storm/Bosnia/Kosovo-like deployment – to pay attention to family needs or to recognize the role they play in our readiness. We charge you to establish a command climate that recognizes the enhancement that families bring to our mission accomplishment. It is a team effort: officers, enlisted, families, and the community all working together to enhance the posture of our National Guard. There are five Family Readiness areas that will receive personal attention during my leadership tenure:

- Consistent verbal and written support to the role of the family and the readiness issues that are vital to them. Use this memorandum to publish your own guidelines stating how you will institute the Family Readiness Program within your organization. Then, ensure all your members (married or single) receive copies, place it on your unit bulletin board, and endorse it to subordinate commands.
- Assignment of a Military Point of Contact for family readiness issues at every level in the chain of command. The most important quality of this individual is empathy for families and their issues. He/She must also have the support of leadership to ensure issues are handled and tasks (i.e. ID cards, DEERS enrollment, community resource guide, etc.) are accomplished.
- Active support of family involvement in unit activities, to include a Family Readiness Group. This group includes the military Point of Contact and family member volunteers, including one family member/retiree volunteer, who coordinates the group and its activities. Your Family Readiness Group is essential to the readiness of your unit during times of training and deployment. It is the system of support for your unit’s families. It needs to be all-inclusive and open not only to spouses, but to all family members and loved ones. Other individuals that should be invited to participate with, and be available to the Family Readiness Group are your servicing JAG, Chaplain, and Recruiting and Retention NCO.
- Involvement of spouses, parents, children and others in the unit’s sponsorship of new members. Introduce them to the mission of the unit and the important role their

Guardmember plays in that mission. Also, use that time to familiarize them with your Family Readiness Program and the Family Readiness Group.

- Individual Accountability. Every member of the Arizona National Guard is responsible to ensure his/her family is ready to accept their service to the nation, state, and community. If the families in your unit are not ready, your unit's safety and readiness is compromised.

To Our Soldiers and Airmen (married or single): Be sure that your families and loved ones have the information they need to actively support your involvement in the Arizona National Guard. With the increase in our missions, you will be called into service more often. That service will make a larger demand on your family and its quality of life. Encourage your family to become part of your unit's family activities, including its Family Readiness Group.

To Our Families: We celebrate you and the sacrifices you make so your loved one can serve in the Arizona National Guard. We do not exaggerate when we say we cannot do what we do without you and your support. The future holds great opportunity and challenges for your Guardmember. We ask that you become involved and serve with us.

We, the Leadership Team of the Arizona National Guard, ask you to participate with us as we recognize the importance of our families and institutionalize our Family Readiness Program and its commitment to "Family Readiness = Unit Readiness" throughout the Arizona National Guard.

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